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Socialist Party

NATIONAL OFFICE

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OTTO BRANSTETTER
220 S. ASHLAND BLVD.

Архив
КОМИТЕТНА
№ 108
МОКБА.

Chicago Ill.
Mar. 12, 1920

K. MINTEPH/

R.PXNB

G. Zinovief, President Executive Committee of the
Communist International,
Moscow, Russia.

Dear Comrade:-

The Socialist Party of the United States held a convention in Chicago, Illinois, commencing August 30, 1919. Two resolutions on International Affiliations were presented to this convention.

The Majority resolution provided for participation in the calling of an international conference. The object of such conference was the formation of a new International to which delegates should be invited from the Communist parties of Russia and Germany and from those Socialist parties in all countries which subscribe to the principles of the class struggle. The resolution excluded from participation any party which participates in a government coalition with parties of the bourgeoisie.

The Minority resolution provided for direct and immediate affiliation with the Communist International, making reservations as to the application of the program to the United States until such time as a Congress could be held.

Copies of these resolutions are attached. Both resolutions were submitted to referendum of the party membership with the result that the Minority resolution providing for immediate affiliation with the Communist International was adopted. I therefore have the honor to apply to the Executive Committee for recognition of the Socialist Party of the United States of America and its admission to the Communist International.

With fraternal greetings and best wishes for the success of our struggling Russian comrades, I am

Fraternally yours,

Otto Branstetter
Executive Secretary

OB-BHW

MINORITY REPORT

We consider that the Second International ceased to function as an international Socialist body upon the outbreak of the world war.

All efforts to bring together the elements that made up the former International have only added strength to this conviction. The Berne Conference was a notable example of this collapse especially with reference to its failure to take a helpful attitude toward Russia and its policy of hanging onto the tails of the Peace Conference in Paris and placid acceptance of rebuffs given it by members of that conference, the refusal of Russian passports, for instance.

Any International, to be effective in this crisis, must contain only those elements who take their stand unreservedly upon the basis of the class struggle, and who by their deeds demonstrate that their adherence to this principle is not mere lip loyalty.

When leading Socialists join their national government upon a coalition basis they accept and sanction policies which hinder Socialists and the working class generally from taking full advantage of the opportunities for deep-seated change which the war creates. This makes the workers content with superficial reformist changes which are readily granted by the capitalist class as a means of self-protection from the rising tide of working class revolt.

And when Socialists use the military organization of the master class as a means of crushing the agitation of their more radical comrades they flatly take their position with the counter-revolutionaries whom they serve.

The Second International is dead. We consider that a new International which contains those groups which contributed to the downfall of our former organization must be so weak in its Socialist policy as to be useless.

The Socialist Party of the United States, in principle and in its past history, has always stood with those elements of other countries that remained true to their principles. The manifestos adopted in national convention at St. Louis (1917) and Chicago (1919), as well as Referendum "D" 1919 unequivocally affirm this stand. These parties, the Majority parties of Russia, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and growing minorities in every land, are uniting on the basis of the preliminary convocation, at Moscow, of the Third International. As in the past, so in this extreme crisis, we must take our stand with them.

The Socialist Party of the United States, therefore, declares itself in support of the Third (Moscow) International, not so much because it supports the "Moscow" programs and methods, but because:

- (a) "Moscow" is doing something which is really challenging to world imperialism.
- (b) "Moscow" is threatened by the combined capitalist forces of the world simply because it is proletarian.
- (c) Under these circumstances, whatever we may have to say to Moscow afterwards, it is the duty of Socialists to stand by it now because its fall will mean the fall of Socialist republics in Europe, and also the disappearance of Socialist hopes for many years to come.

G. Zinovief.

Dear Comrade:-

In connection with our formal application for affiliation with the Communist International which accompaniees this communication, it is perhaps desirable that I state at some length the position of our organization has maintained before, during and since the participation of the United States in the world war. At the outbreak of the war in Europe, the Socialist Party immediately took the position that it was fundamentally a war for commercial supremacy in which the working class of the various European countries had no interest. We urged the necessity of the American Government remaining neutral, denounced the munition manufacturers for furnishing munitions, and advocated an embargo on all food stuffs in order to starve the belligerents into an early peace. We demanded that our government use its good offices at every opportunity to bring about the cessation of hostilities and set forth as early as May 1915 the basis upon which peace should be made.

The Proclamation of the National Executive Committee, May 1915, setting forth terms of peace, included the proposal for the abolition of secret diplomacy and the demand for no annexations or punitive indemnities, afterwards honestly adopted and made famous by our Russian comrades and hypocritically included by President Wilson in his fourteen points.

In connection with these efforts, we of course carried on a continuous anti-militarist and anti-imperialist campaign of agitation. When, in spite of our efforts, the American government entered the war, we held an Emergency Convention at St. Louis, April 7th - 14th, 1917, in which we adopted the Declaration and War Program. This resolution provided for

continuous and public -2-
our unflinching and unceasing opposition to the war and
that the position was maintained to the best of our ability
thruout its duration. There were, of course, some elements
in our party in this country, as in all others, which became
social patriotic and demanded that the Socialist Party
support the government in its war measures. I am proud to
say that this element in the American Socialist Party was extremely
comparatively small and that the St. Louis Resolution was
adopted by an overwhelming majority in the referendum vote.

Some more or less prominent comrades, including
John Spargo, A. M. Simone, Chas. Ed. Russell, Allan Benson
and the Appeal to Reason staff, either withdrew from the Party
or were expelled on account of their opposition to the Party's
position. The number of those who followed them out of the
Party was insignificant and the rank and file of our membership
stood unwaveringly by the organization and its declarations.

} That the National Party officials were as loyal
loyal and devoted and steadfast in maintaining the position of
the Party, is proven by the fact that the National Executive
Secretary, the editor of our official organ, the manager of our
Literature Department, the Secretary of the Young Peoples
Socialist League, were convicted and sentenced to twenty years
each under the Espionage Act.

The National Executive Committee at that time
consisted of fifteen members. Four members of this committee
were convicted and served or are now serving sentence ranging
from one to twenty years. Another member, Victor Berger, was
convicted along with the four party officials mentioned above
and received a sentence of twenty years which is now pending
before the Court of Appeals. The executive Secretary was
indicted and tried on another charge prior to the trial in which

he was convicted, Comrade Berger has four other indictments against him and still another member of the committee was also indicted.

The number xxxxxxxxx of state and local party officials who were convicted throughout the country is proportionately large.

In view of this record and of the published resolutions of the National Executive Committee throughout the war, dealing with both the domestic and foreign situation, accusations that the Socialist Party of the United States was reactionary, chauvinistic or social patriotic, is a deliberate and wilful misrepresentation of the facts. I have the pleasure of enclosing copies of various proclamations and manifestoes adopted by our organization both in convention and by action of the National Executive Committee from August 1914 until the present date.

The Socialist Party of the United States is justly proud of this record. It is ~~the only party in any of the belligerent countries which~~ steadfastly maintained a position in opposition to the war and the policies of its government. In ~~all~~ other countries the Socialist Party was split and the majority factions supported their respective governments while only the minorities were opposed. In the United States, not only was the majority in favor of ~~xxx~~ the true international position, but the entire party was. The few individuals who left the Party on account of our St. Louis Declaration and ~~our actions following that convention~~ were not of sufficient number or importance to constitute a split. Our Party was solidly united in support of our organization and its declarations. [There ~~were~~ no split in the American Socialist Party on account of or during the war. The split in this country

occured a year after the signing of the armistice, and the seceding ~~of~~ insurgent elements was largely composed of comrades who had never been affiliated with the Socialist Party until after the signing of the armistice and of those who, tho affiliated, were conspicuously silent and inactive during the war.

Suffice it to say that the Socialist Party of the United States and its officials, now denounced by the leaders of the Communist and Communist Labor Party, ~~KKK~~ as traitors and reactionaries, is the same party and its officials and leaders are the same men who adopted the St. Louis Declaration and following resolutions and who maintained the active party work and agitation during three years of persecution and black reaction.

I trust that you and other members of your committee and the comradse generally, will take these facts into consideration ~~before passing adverse judgement upon our~~ party. Certainly the record of the Socialist Party of the United States is remarkable for its consistency and revolutionary character. The personal record of its officials from the time we entered the war, until the signing of the armistice, is unquestionable far superior to that of the alleged revolutionary leaders ~~of~~ who sprang into prominence and activity only after the signing of the armistice when ^{presumably} ~~they supposed~~ that there was no particular danger attached to such activities.

The fact that the most prominent and influential leaders in the recent split ~~KKKK~~ have fled to ~~safety~~ in foreign countries, while their deluded and deserted followers ^{and} ~~were~~ being thrown into jails and penitentiaries by the thousands, is significant of the caliber and

character of those leaders. On the contrary, the leaders of the Socialist Party have been in the forefront of the fight since the beginning. They have not shirked responsibility or its consequences. They have not run away to seek safety for themselves and let the government vent its hatred upon obscure and unknown members. They have made and will continue to make the fight for international socialism ~~with unswerving courage~~.
~~They will continue courageous~~
~~and the willingness to endure whatever persecution or punishment~~
they receive for the sake of their principles. in order to solidify & inspire the movement. Yours for International Socialism,

OB:EL.

Executive Secretary.